

AMA

Program Purpose

AMA assists agricultural producers to manage risk and voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation practices into their farming operations

What's new under the 2008 Farm Bill

Funding of \$15,000,000 is made available through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) for each of the fiscal years 2008-2012

What land is eligible?

Private agricultural and non-industrial forest-land

Length of Agreement

3-10 years

Financial Assistance

Incentive payments

Producer Obligations

- Participants are expected to maintain cost-shared practices for the life of the practice.
- An AMA plan of operations is required. NRCS will work with the applicant to develop this plan.

Common Practices

IPM, Irrigation, Water Management Structures

CSP

Program Purpose

The Conservation Stewardship Program encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by:

- Undertaking additional conservation activities; and
- Improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities

What's new under the 2008 Farm Bill

Program will be available to all eligible producers instead of being offered only in designated watersheds

To be eligible to participate in CSP, applicants must:

- Demonstrate that they are meeting the stewardship threshold for at least one resource concern; and
- Address at least one additional priority resource concern by the end of the conservation stewardship contract

What land is eligible?

Private agricultural land and forested land that is an incidental part of an agricultural operation is eligible

Length of agreement

5 years

Financial Assistance

Annual payments

Producer Obligations

A conservation security plan is required to install and/or maintain conservation practices on working lands

The 2008 Farm Bill provides for voluntary participation, offers incentives, and focuses on equity in accessing USDA programs and services. Enhancements include streamlined delivery of technical and financial assistance, and improved programs and services. New and beginning farmers, limited resource farmers, and minority farmers may be eligible to receive a higher payment rate and advance practice payments of up to 30 percent for materials for construction when work can begin immediately.

How to get started

To get started working with NRCS, visit your local NRCS field office or Conservation District. NRCS is listed in your phone book's federal government section under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. You can also find NRCS field offices online at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator>.

An NRCS employee will work with you to develop a conservation plan for your operation. The conservation plan will address your conservation goals and environmental risks on your farm.

Financial assistance for conservation measures is available through the programs described in this brochure. Your local conservationist will help you determine which program(s) best fit your needs.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In partnership with local Conservation Districts, NRCS is charged with promoting and supporting conservation on private lands.

Working with NRCS is always a voluntary decision on the part of a landowner. The ultimate goal of NRCS is to ensure that our natural resources will be preserved for future generations.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

2008 Farm Bill Conservation Programs for Pennsylvania



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Environmental Quality Incentives Program

EQIP

Program Purpose

To provide financial and technical assistance to farmers who face threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land; EQIP provides financial incentives to producers to promote agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals

What’s new under the 2008 Farm Bill

- EQIP purposes clarified to include forest management and energy conservation, as well as practices related to organic production
- Increased payments for socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers in addition to beginning and limited resource producers
- There is a \$300,000 payment limit

What land is eligible?

Private agricultural and non-industrial forestland.

Length of Agreement

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of ten years

Financial Assistance

Incentive payments

Producer Obligations

Develop and follow an EQIP plan that describes the conservation and environmental purposes to be achieved and assist with installation costs

Common Practices

Animal Waste Storage Facilities, Grazing Systems, Conservation Tillage, Nutrient Management, Erosion Control and Water Quality Practices

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative

CBWI

Program Purpose

CBWI provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers to implement conservation practices to minimize nutrient and sediment losses in order to restore, preserve, and protect local water quality and the Chesapeake Bay.

This initiative is new under the 2008 Farm Bill

CBWI will offer incentive payments to implement a targeted list of practices in priority watersheds.

What land is eligible?

Private agricultural and non-industrial land located within the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed; Farms within designated priority watersheds will receive additional consideration in the ranking process.

Length of agreement

2-5 years

Financial Assistance

Incentive payments

Producer Obligations

- Develop and follow a plan that describes the conservation and environmental purposes to be achieved
- Implement conservation practices

Common Practices

Cover Crops, Nutrient Management, Stream-bank Fencing, Conservation Buffers, Continuous No-till

Wetlands Reserve Program

WRP

Program Purpose

WRP offers landowners the opportunity to protect and restore wetlands on their property; The program’s goal is to achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program

What’s new under the 2008 Farm Bill

- Payments for easements valued at \$500,000 or more will be made in at least five annual payments
- For restoration cost-share agreements, annual payments may not exceed \$50,000 per year
- No easement shall be created on land that has changed ownership during the preceding 7 years
- Eligible acres are limited to private lands

What land is eligible?

Most private wetlands converted to agricultural use prior to 1985 are eligible; Wetland must be restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits

Length of Agreement

10-year agreements, 30-year or permanent easements

Financial Assistance

One-time conservation easement payment; Up to 100 percent cost-share for restoring or improving wetland habitat

Producer Obligations

Develop and follow a plan for the restoration and maintenance of the wetland; If necessary, assist with the cost of restoration; For easements follow and uphold easement restrictions

Common Practices

Wetland Restoration, Wetland Enhancement, Conservation Cover, Tree Planting

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

WHIP

Program Purpose

WHIP is a voluntary program for private landowners to develop and improve high-quality habitat that supports wildlife populations of National, State, and local significance

What’s new under the 2008 Farm Bill

- Payments may not exceed \$50,000 per year
- Publicly owned land is not eligible

What land is eligible?

Land eligible for WHIP includes:

- Private agricultural land
- Non-industrial private forestland

Length of Agreement

5—10 years

Financial Assistance

Incentive payments

Producer Obligations

Prepare and follow a wildlife habitat development plan; Assist with installation costs

Common Practices

Conservation Cover, Tree/Shrub Establishment, Early Successional Habitat, Stream and Stream Corridor Habitat